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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/648,127	08/25/2003	Michael L. Sloan	10536	3212

36493 7590 05/17/2005

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SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-4603

EXAMINER

GALL, LLOYD A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3676

DATE MAILED: 05/17/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/648,127

Applicant(s)

SLOAN, MICHAEL L.

Examiner

Lloyd A. Gall

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 February 2005.  
2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.  
4a) Of the above claim(s) 4-8 and 11-14 is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.  
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 9, 10 and 15-19 is/are rejected.  
7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 August 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).  
\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.  
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### DETAILED ACTION

Applicant's election of the species of figure 4 in the reply filed on February 17, 2005 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claims 4-8 and 11-14 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on February 17, 2005.

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: On page 3, line 3, "provided" should read --provide--. On page 8, line 10, the period after "end" should be deleted. On page 8, line 12, "28" should read --32--. On page 8, line 13, "are" should read --and--. On page 9, line 13, "34" should read --39--. On page 11, line 20, "the an" is grammatically incorrect.

Appropriate correction is required.

The drawings are objected to because reference numerals 23 and 24 on page 7, line 2 are not shown. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the

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replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 9, 10 and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Winning (367) in view of Dyson (559).

Winning teaches a tactile encoded combination lock including a lock housing having an exterior wall 16, a closure piece 10, a circular dial 15 having an inner side 21 connected to a shaft, a mechanism 9 for controlling operation of the shackle 10, the outer side of the dial having a tactile dial index 20, wherein the dial index 20 cooperates with a tactile registration index 30 and multiple tactile position indices 31. Dyson teaches a closure piece 8 having coupling means (notch) to be engaged with a lock mechanism coupling means receiver 10, wherein the closure piece 8, 9 can move axially and rotatively about the long leg 8. It would have been obvious to modify the lock of Winning such that the

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closure piece 10 includes coupling means to be locked with a receiver in the lock, and wherein the closure piece moves axially and rotatively to its unlocked condition, in view of the teaching of Dyson, to allow the closure piece to lock an article with the closure piece, as well known in the padlock art.

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Winning in view of Dyson as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Willey (441).

Willey teaches that it is well known to provide tactile indicia which is defined by a nub 46 in a depressed region of a dial 50. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute a nub in a depressed region for the tactile indicia 20 of Winning, in view of the teaching of Willey, since any type of well known indicia would function just as well.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Winning in view of Dyson as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of either Lucas (017) or Miller (358).

Lucas teaches that vertically aligned nubs (at numeral 2 in fig. 3) are well known in determining a lock combination, as does Miller teach that vertically aligned nubs (at 17 in fig. 2) are well known. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute vertically aligned nubs for the index 30 of Winning, in view of the teaching of either Lucas or Miller, since any well known indicia would function just as well in determining the unlocking combination.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

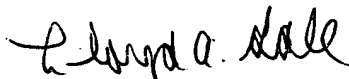
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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lloyd A. Gall whose telephone number is 571-272-7056. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LG LG  
May 12, 2005

  
Lloyd A. Gall  
Primary Examiner